



Director of
Central
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NORTH YEMEN - USSR: Soviet Military Assistance

[redacted] Sanaa will send more military personnel to the USSR to train on advanced weapons, including surface-to-surface missiles. President Salih requested such weaponry during his visit to Moscow last October, and discussions on the terms of purchase continue. About 1,500 North Yemenis are studying in Soviet military academies, and 500 to 700 Soviet advisers are assisting North Yemeni forces.// [redacted]

Comment: Salih probably wants to maintain a balance between the Saudis, who he depends upon for financial assistance, and the Soviets, who he relies upon for weaponry, spare parts, and ammunition. He also may hope that his willingness to increase military ties with the Soviets will encourage them to mediate a reduction in South Yemeni support for insurgents of the National Democratic Front. Salih, however, is risking the possibility that the Saudis may reverse their recent decision to increase support for his regime.

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